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Identical letters dated 20 June 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I wish to draw your attention to the following information:

Over the last two and a half years, since the outbreak of the crisis in Syria, the head of the so-called International Union of Muslim Scholars Yusuf al-Qaradawi and a clique of purported Muslim scholars and sheikhs such as Abdulaziz bin Abdullah Al al-Shaykh and Muhammad al-Arifi of Saudi Arabia, Safwat Hijazi and Muhammad Hasan of Egypt, and Shafi Sultan al-Ajami of Kuwait, have continuously and repeatedly issued *takfirist* fatwas, rulings and statements advocating terrorism and supporting its perpetrators. Their actions contravene religious and humanitarian principles and values, human rights principles and United Nations resolutions, directly abetting the Al-Qaida organization and associated *takfirist* movements active in Syria. Such fatwas are political, despite their religious veneer. They are part of an aggressive incitement campaign spearheaded by Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and certain Western States.

In his Friday sermon of 31 May 2013, as in all of his Friday sermons, Al-Qaradawi held forth from his pulpit in Doha, expounding his ideology of incitement and advocating killing, hatred, extremism and "jihad". He described a religious denomination in Syria as greater infidels than "Jews and Christians". Through such incitement, Al-Qaradawi passed a death sentence on three denominations and religions, "the Nusayris, the Jews and the Christians", which are spread all over the world. He drew on the nature and substance of a campaign of incitement that is characteristic of extremist terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaida.

In pursuit of incitement and sectarian strife, Al-Qaradawi and a number of scholars of strife held a conference in Cairo on 12 and 13 June 2013 entitled "Support for the Syrian people". Al-Qaradawi, along with a number of the scholars of incitement and strife who took the floor, again fomented extremism and fanaticism against other confessions. Al-Qaradawi stated that a widespread Islamic

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denomination were "idolaters" and that they were fighting the Sunnis. He called clearly and explicitly for an uprising and a campaign against them, calling on the Muslim masses around the world to defend their brethren. In so doing, he has adopted and legitimized *takfir* and incitement to murder.

Muhammad al-Arifi, head of the so-called World Union of Preachers, lost no time in calling for the terrorists he referred to as "Mujahidin" to be armed and trained to fight in Syria. Some days earlier, a *salafist takfirist* sheikh in Kuwait, Shafi al-Ajami, who teaches at the College of Sharia at Kuwait University, went on satellite television to recognize clearly and explicitly that a terrorist faction of the "Al-Nusrah Front" had, at his behest and with his funding, perpetrated the horrifying massacre of dozens of innocent civilians in the Syrian village of Hatlah, in the Governorate of Dayr al-Zawr. He said: "Today, we took the village of Hatlah and slaughtered Mr. Husayn and his son with knives. The towns of Nubul and Zahra in Aleppo will be next". Mr. Al-Ajami had previously funded, armed and deployed to Syria hundreds of *takfirist* terrorists.

The outcome document of the conference called shamelessly for "an uprising and jihad with mind, funds and weapons and all forms of jihad and assistance" on Syrian territory. That call amounts to directly recruiting armed terrorists from around the world, infiltrating them into Syria and supporting them through every means as part of a *takfirist*, *salafist* and Wahhabi agenda. Its purpose is bring to completion the bloodthirsty approach adopted by numerous regional and Western States, particularly Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, in order to destroy Syria and sow dissension among its people. It is intended to justify the systematic killing of innocent Syrian civilians; slaughter and rape; the eating of human hearts; acts of genocide and mass murder; the detonation of car bombs; the demolition of infrastructure and public and private property; and the destruction of Syrian civilization, history and culture, all the while claiming to rescue the Syrian people. That is why the so-called Union of Muslim Scholars condemned the inclusion by the Security Council of the "Al-Nusrah Front" on the list established and maintained by the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011). The Union considers that group to be part of the "Syrian revolution".

By allowing the sheikhs of strife to incite terrorism and murder from its pulpits, the Egyptian Government has shown clearly that it is an accomplice in those terrorist crimes and the shedding of Syrian blood.

The International Union of Muslim Scholars was founded in June 2004 in Dublin and moved its headquarters to Qatar in March 2012. Through the efforts of certain sheikhs, it has become a prominent source of incitement to terrorism, strife and extremism, not to mention an open and explicit means to recruit, fund, arm and provide every form of support to terrorists, including the Al-Qaida organization.

The Syrian Arab Republic considers that the scholars of strife, incitement, *takfir* and open advocacy of murder, along with the Governments that support them and their fatwas, bear direct responsibility for the shedding of Syrian blood. By inciting terrorism, by funding it directly, by recruiting and sheltering terrorists and by seeking to destroy Syria and change its Government against the will of its people, they are blatantly intervening in the country's internal affairs and violating the principles of international law and the Security Council resolutions that condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. They are committing an act of aggression against Syria and threatening the use of force against it.

In setting out those realities before the Security Council and the international community, Syria requests them to shoulder their responsibilities under the counter-terrorism resolutions of the Council, particularly resolutions 1267 (1999), 1373 (2001), 1624 (2005) and 1989 (2011). Syria requests that the States involved in supporting terrorism in the country, particularly Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and France, desist from such violations, which endanger the peace and security of Syria and the region.

Syria again highlights the threat posed by the spread of extremism, terrorism, *takfirist* ideology and incitement to murder and fanaticism. It warns of the perils of involvement in supporting *takfirist* Al-Qaida-linked terrorism such as that of the "Al-Nusrah Front" and its allies the Islamic Brigades and the "Free Syrian Army", most of whose units have declared their allegiance to the "Al-Nusrah Front".

I should be grateful if this letter could be issued as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 105, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative